DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 133 432 CE 007 620

AUTHOR Bell, T.H.
TITLE New Outlooks for Vocational Education.
REPORT NO VT-103-560
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 10p.; Speech presented at the Spring Joint Meeting of the National and State Advisory Councils on Vocational Education (Washington, D.C., May 6, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Agencies; Advisory Committees; *Agency Role; *Educational Legislation; *Educational Needs; *Educational Responsibility; Federal State Relationship; Government Role; Speeches; State Action; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS Vocational Education Amendments 1976

ABSTRACT

The accomplishments and activities of the National and State Advisory Councils, the implications of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1976, and opportunities and problems now facing vocational education are discussed. The author comments that the amendments (1976) are primarily concerned with defining the Federal role in vocational education, and that other legislative administrative efforts would include simplifying the administration of program funds, construction of additional facilities, and improved planning. Quality control, equal opportunity, data collection, teacher recruitment, and program effectiveness are recognized as major challenges facing vocational education. (TM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED133432
OCT 21 1976

NEW OUTLOOKS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION *

T. H. BELL

U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE TODAY AT THIS SPRING JOINT MEETING OF THE NATIONAL AND STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

I HAVE MET WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL BEFORE. I HAVE FOUND IT ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE GROUPS I HAVE EVER BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH, AND I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN MY REMARKS TODAY BY ADDRESSING ITS MEMBERS DIRECTLY.

I AM CONVINCED, MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL, THAT YOUR VISION AND DEDICATION HAVE HELPED RAISE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO THE DESERVEDLY PROMINENT POSITION IT ENJOYS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION TODAY. EARLY IN YOUR EXISTENCE, IN 1969, YOU ISSUED A REPORT MEETING HEAD-ON WHAT YOU TERMED A "NATIONAL SIN OF INTELLECTUAL SNOBBERY," A SNOBBERY WHICH HELD THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS "FOR SOMEBODY ELSE'S CHILDREN." YOU MADE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO UTILIZE THE POTENTIAL OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR "ELIMINATING UNEMPLOYMENT, UNREST, AND VIOLENCE IN OUR COUNTRY."

THE SAME YEAR YOU ISSUED A SECOND REPORT. THIS ONE CALLED FOR DIRECTING THE DISADVANTAGED "INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION" TO ENABLE THEM TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER. IN SUBSEQUENT REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES -- NEVER LOSING SIGHT OF THE HUMAN DIMENSION -- YOUR COUNCIL HAS SHOWN SIMILAR DISCERNMENT AND A CONCERN FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION'S ROLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

---

* PREPARED FOR SPRING JOINT MEETING OF THE NATIONAL AND STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D.C. MAY 6, 1976, 9:15 A.M. EDT.

CE 007 620

VT 103 560

I THANK YOU FOR ALL THIS.

NOW, LEST MEMBERS OF THE STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS THINK I AM SOME KIND OF FEDERAL CHAUVINIST, I WANT TO SPEAK A FEW WORDS DIRECTLY TO THEM, TOO.

STATE COUNCIL MEMBERS, YOU TOO HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING ABOUT MANY OF THE DRAMATIC CHANGES WE HAVE SEEN IN RECENT YEARS IN THE NATION'S APPROACH TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

YOUR INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES HAVE BEEN OF GREAT SERVICE. YOU HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANNUAL AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING, AND YOUR WILLINGNESS TO "TELL IT LIKE IT IS" HAS HELPED STATE BOARDS BROADEN THEIR PERSPECTIVE IN CARRYING OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

MY ABUNDANT THANKS TO YOU ALSO!

AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME, A MATTER OF IMMEDIATE INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUR COUNCILS, AND TO THOSE IN THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION CONCERNED WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS WELL, IS WHAT KIND OF LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE WILL EMERGE FROM CONGRESS AFTER IT FINISHES WRESTLING WITH THE PROPOSED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1976.

REGARDLESS OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE ULTIMATE ENACTMENT, I THINK THAT THE LEGISLATIVE GIVE AND TAKE WE ARE WITNESSING WILL RESULT IN BETTER AND MORE EFFECTIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

MUCH OF THE PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS AN ATTEMPT TO BE RESPONSIVE TO CRITICISMS IN THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE REPORT SO HEAVILY PUBLICIZED LAST YEAR ENTITLED "WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?"

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ATTEMPTED TO DEFINE MORE CLEARLY IN SEVERAL WAYS THE FEDERAL ROLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

IT SEEKS, FOR ONE THING, TO SPOTLIGHT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CATALYTIC ROLE MORE SHARPLY BY CURTAILING FEDERAL FUNDS FOR PROGRAM MAINTENANCE. IT WOULD INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDS FOR INNOVATION, CAPACITY BUILDING, PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT, AND NEW PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT.

OTHER ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS WOULD SIMPLIFY STATE AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL VOCATIONAL PROGRAM FUNDS AND INCREASE EMPHASIS ON MEETING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS -- THE DISADVANTAGED AND THE HANDICAPPED, AS TWO EXAMPLES.

THE ADMINISTRATION ALSO FEELS THAT FURTHER CONSTRUCTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FACILITIES SHOULD BE A STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY. STATE PLAN PROJECTS HAVE SHOWN A STEADILY REDUCED RELIANCE ON FEDERAL MONEY FOR CONSTRUCTION, AND THAT IS THE REASON THE ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY BE DROPPED.

THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONCERNED TOO ABOUT THE NEED FOR IMPROVED PLANNING. IT WOULD REQUIRE A STRENGTHENED FORWARD PLAN, TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE STATE EDUCATION AGENCY IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER STATE PLANNING AND MANPOWER AGENCIES. IT ALSO WOULD REQUIRE AN ANNUAL PROGRAM PLAN DETAILING HOW ALL FEDERAL FUNDS WOULD BE SPENT.

TO ASSIST STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES IN THEIR LONG-RANGE PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES, THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION WOULD ANNUALLY CONDUCT AND PUBLISH FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE STATES AN ASSESSMENT OF CRITICAL NATIONAL NEEDS AND HIGH NATIONAL PRIORITIES.

CE 007 620

IN SHORT, THE ADMINISTRATION FEELS THE TIME HAS ARRIVED TO BREAK THE TRADITIONAL FUNDING PATTERN OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN WHICH THE FEDERAL ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION HAS BECOME INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS. IT FEELS IT IS TIME TO EMBARK IN A NEW DIRECTION, ONE IN WHICH THE BENEFITS FROM FEDERAL FUNDS WOULD BE MORE VISIBLE AND MORE EASILY EVALUATED. TO EXPRESS THE SAME BASIC THOUGHT FROM ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE, THE ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO EXPAND THE STATES' LEEWAY TO DESIGN, ADOPT, AND REVISE PROGRAMS WHICH PROVIDE THE SKILLS NEEDED IN OUR LABOR MARKET.

HOUSE BILL 12835 REQUIRES THAT EVERY STATE BE REVIEWED BY 1981 TO DETERMINE ITS CAPACITY TO COMPLY WITH FEDERAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION LEGISLATION. EVEN THOUGH 12835 IS STILL PENDING, OFFICE OF EDUCATION HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL STAFF PEOPLE ARE MEETING WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF EIGHT STATES THIS FISCAL YEAR IN A MANAGEMENT EVALUATION REVIEW. ONCE EVERY STATE AND TERRITORY IS REVIEWED, IT WILL BE REVIEWED AGAIN EVERY THREE YEARS.

EACH FIVE-DAY REVIEW WILL FOCUS ON SUCH THINGS AS THE STATE'S ANNUAL AND LONG-RANGE PLANS, FISCAL AND DESCRIPTIVE REPORTS, NATIONAL AND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS, AND GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE AND HEW AUDIT REPORTS. THE REVIEW TEAM WILL MAKE A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO THE STATE DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND OTHER APPROPRIATE STATE OFFICIALS BEFORE IT LEAVES THE STATE. LATER, AFTER THE TEAM MAKES ITS FINAL REPORT, REGIONAL OFFICIALS OF THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION'S BUREAU OF OCCUPATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION WILL ARRANGE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IF THE STATE NEEDS IT TO PUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINAL REPORT INTO EFFECT. THE BUREAU WILL FOLLOW UP ON PROGRESS.

As I have said, at this time no one can predict what the finally enacted vocational amendments of 1976 will embrace. The House bill was reported out of committee on April 8 with 21 amendments. With its provision for consolidation of most vocational education programs, it has a number of features fairly close to what the Administration proposed. The Senate bill's provisions are more in keeping with the Senate's tradition of categorical support. I will leave it to the spokesmen for the Legislative Branch who are to follow me to speculate -- if they want to -- on what may be agreed upon by House-Senate conferees.

One feature central to most congressional proposals on vocational education concerns governance. The question of who will be involved in planning and administering the Nation's vocational education programs is all-pervasive and concerns every person in this room.

There are a number of reasons this question is emerging at this time. More groups than ever before are taking a vital and vocal interest in vocational education. There is tighter competition between secondary and postsecondary institutions for shrinking tax dollars. Federal legislation is influencing State and local education expenditures.

Because of the increasing pulls and pressures of various interest groups, I predict we will see the evolution of a broader perspective in vocational education planning and programming. The chore of hammering out a consensus among competing interest groups may raise the blood pressure at times, but I feel sure that in the long run it will lead to more effective vocational education.

NEW, BROAD-BASED ALLIANCES WILL BE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. AN EXAMPLE WE CAN EXPECT IS THAT MAYORS, GOVERNORS, CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS, AND SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS WILL WORK TOGETHER UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACT.

MANY OTHER CHALLENGES FACE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, SOME OF THEM QUITE SOON. THEY CALL FOR GOOD THINKING, GOOD WILL, AND GOOD COUNSEL, ON YOUR PART AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S, IF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS TO GROW AND CARRY OUT ITS MISSION EFFECTIVELY.

IN THE PAST FEW DECADES THIS NATION'S CONCEPT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR EDUCATION HAS EXPANDED DRAMATICALLY. CONGRESS AND THE COURTS MADE IT CLEAR LONG AGO THAT THE ECONOMICALLY AND CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED MUST BE STEERED INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF EDUCATION. MORE RECENTLY THEY HAVE TAKEN THE SAME POSTURE CONCERNING THE HANDICAPPED.

THE SEX EQUALITY MOVEMENT MAKES IT INCUMBENT ON US TO SQUEEZE ALL SEX BIAS OUT OF EDUCATION. THE CHALLENGE HERE IS FOR VOCATIONAL COUNSELORS AS MUCH AS FOR TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS. MANY AN OLD TRIED AND TRUE MUST NOW BE CAST ASIDE. AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT I MEAN WAS UNCOVERED BY A RECENT STUDY OF CAREER GUIDANCE MATERIALS BY A GRANTEE OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION.

ONE HANDBOOK EXAMINED IN THE NIE STUDY DECLARED THAT GOOD GROOMING IS A REQUISITE FOR THOSE ENTERING THE SECRETARIAL FIELD. SO FAR, SO GOOD, BUT THEN THIS HANDBOOK LISTED THE FOLLOWING AS CHARACTERISTIC OF GOOD GROOMING:

"GOOD POSTURE, ATTRACTIVE GLASSES, MANICURED HANDS, SMOOTH ARMS AND LEGS, PROPER GIRDLES TO FIRM BUTTOCKS."

THEN THERE WAS THE BIT THAT ADVISED AN ASPIRING FEMALE DOCTOR THAT SHE WILL NEED "THE CONSTITUTION OF AN OX, A HUSBAND ABLE TO ACCEPT HIS WIFE AS A PROFESSIONAL, AND ENOUGH INCOME TO HIRE DOMESTIC HELP FOR THE PURELY MECHANICAL CHORES."

I'M SURE THIS KIND OF THING WILL SOON GO BY THE BOARDS. AT LEAST I WISH I COULD BE SURE.

GETTING BACK TO A MORE SERIOUS VEIN, I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME THOUGHTS I HAVE BEEN KICKING AROUND FOR SOME TIME ABOUT THE PROBLEMS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES NOW FACING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OR WHICH LOOM ON THE HORIZON. IN EITHER CASE, IT WOULD SEEM PRUDENT, ESPECIALLY FOR THESE NATIONAL AND STATE COUNCILS, TO ADDRESS THEM.

ONE OF MY THOUGHTS RELATES TO QUALITY CONTROL — OR THE LACK OF IT.

I OFTEN HEAR PEOPLE SAY THAT, WHEREAS ONCE WE GOT GOOD WORKMANSHIP UNDER BAD WORKING CONDITIONS, TODAY WE GET SHODDY WORKMANSHIP UNDER EXCELLENT WORKING CONDITIONS. THIS SHOULD TELL SOMETHING TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS. WHEN A NEIGHBOR ASKS "DO YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN GET MY CAR FIXED WITHOUT GETTING RIPPED OFF?" HE IS IN EFFECT POINTING A FINGER, HOWEVER INDIRECTLY, AT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION. PSYCHOLOGISTS, TEACHERS, AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS MUST BECOME MORE DEEPLY INVOLVED WITH THIS ROOT PROBLEM OF MOTIVATION AND PRIDE. SO MUST LABOR UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT.

OF A PIECE WITH THE PROBLEM OF QUALITY IS THE NEED FOR STUDENTS TO BE AWARE THAT THEY MUST MAKE INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMON GOOD. TOO ZEALOUS A PURSUIT OF SELF-INTEREST CAN LEAD TO CHAOS FOR BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY.

A THIRD THOUGHT OF MINE REVOLVES AROUND DATA COLLECTION, ITS INTERPRETATION, THE USE TO WHICH IT IS PUT. NO ONE DISPUTES THAT THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE TO COLLECT DATA TO FORECAST MANPOWER NEEDS AND TO SET UP VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO MATCH THOSE NEEDS. MY CONCERN IS THAT WE NOT FALL INTO THE TRAP OF ATTEMPTING TO PREPLAN THE FUTURE OF OUR CITIZENS, DEVITALIZING THEIR JOB OPTIONS. WE MUST HEED THE VOICES THAT WARN US THAT THE BUREAUCRATIC GRIP IS TIGHTENING IN THE PRIVATE AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC SECTOR. THERE MAY BE SOMETHING TO WHAT THEY SAY. WE MUST MAKE SURE THAT DATA COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION ENLIGHTEN AND ENHANCE THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF INDIVIDUALS AND EMPLOYERS, WITHIN ACCEPTED BOUNDS OF NON-DISCRIMINATION.

MY FOURTH THOUGHT HAS TO DO WITH TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND THE EXCELLENT LIAISON THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION HAS ESTABLISHED WITH BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND LABOR. IF YOU ACCEPT THE PROPOSITION THAT THE KEY TO GOOD VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS GOOD TEACHING, THEN EFFORTS TO UPGRADE THE METHODS OF TEACHER RECRUITMENT, AND THE CALIBER OF RECRUITS, MUST NEVER END. AMONG OTHER FACTORS, GETTING AND KEEPING GOOD TEACHERS INVOLVES SALARIES, BETTER LIAISON WITH TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES AS WELL AS SCHOOL BOARDS AND UNIONS, RECRUITMENT FROM INDUSTRY, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, AND GOOD WORKING CLIMATE.

MY FINAL THOUGHT IS THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, NOW MORE THAN EVER, HAS TO DEMONSTRATE IT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY FOR YOUTHS AND ADULTS TO GET A JOB, PROGRESS UP THE JOB LADDER, AND ENJOY THE PERSONAL SATISFACTIONS THAT COME FROM BEING GAINFULLY EMPLOYED.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COSTS CONSIDERABLY MORE PER PUPIL THAN GENERAL AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION. PERHAPS MY THOUGHT BOILS DOWN TO WHETHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS REALLY PREPARED TO JUSTIFY ITS COST TO THE SATISFACTION OF TAXPAYERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN THESE STRINGENT ECONOMIC TIMES.

THE NATIONAL AND STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS, WITH THEIR MANDATE TO CONDUCT REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS, ARE IN A SPLENDID POSITION TO SEE THAT THE OBJECTIVE DATA SO BADLY NEEDED TO SUPPORT SUCH A JUSTIFICATION ARE PRODUCED.

I HAVE OUTLINED A FEW OF THE BIGGER CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS I SEE THEM. THEY ARE A BIG ORDER -- BUT I CAN THINK OF NO ORGANIZED GROUPS BETTER EQUIPPED WITH THE COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, AND TALENT TO TACKLE THEM THAN THE NATIONAL AND STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

###